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**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.
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09/546,256    04/10/00    HOWE

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PM82/0523

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EXAMINER
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TSAY, F	
ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER

3672

DATE MAILED:

05/23/01

*3*

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

**Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks**

# Office Action Summary

Application No.  
09/546,256

Applicant(s)  
Howe et al

Examiner  
Frank S. Tsay

Art Unit  
3672



-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

## Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE three MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136 (a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

## Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on Apr 10, 2000.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

## Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-19 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above, claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-7, 9, 11-13, 15, and 17 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 8, 10, 14, 16, 18, and 19 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claims \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

## Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to by the Examiner.
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

## Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some\* c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \*See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e).

## Attachment(s)

- 15) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 18) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). \_\_\_\_\_
- 16) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 19) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 17) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s). \_\_\_\_\_ 20) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

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## DETAILED ACTION

### *Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112*

1. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

2. Claims 5, 7, 9, 11, and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

In claims 5, "the storage tank" does not have sufficient antecedent support.

Claims 7, 9, and 11, "the first position" should be "the first location", also in claim 9, "the second position" should be "the second location".

Claims 15, line 3, the first appearance of "having a" should be deleted.

### *Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102*

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless --

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

4. Claims 1-6, 12, 13 and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by O'Neill et al (US Patent No. 3,294,185).

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O'Neill et al discloses a Subsea Drilling apparatus which comprises everything including a submarine A . The storage facility is anticipated by production tanks D. The collection port and the probe are anticipated since they are meant to collect production fluids.

5. Claims 8, 10, 11, 14, 16 objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

6. Claims 7, 9, 11 and 15 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph, set forth in this Office action and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

### *Conclusion*

7. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Brooks et al, James, Baker, Talley, Jr., and Rule et al all show subsea drilling/production apparatus.

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Dr. Frank S. Tsay whose telephone number is (703) 308-2170. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday from 8:30 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. E.T.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Mr. David Bagnell, can be reached on (703) 308-2151. The fax phone number for this Group is (703)305-3597, (703) 305-7687, or (703) 306-4195.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is (703)308-2168.

Tsay/FT

May 18, 2001

  
**Frank S. Tsay**  
**Primary Examiner**  
**Group 3600**